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ABSTRACT

This booklet is part of a set of materials based on the belief that by getting teachers to agree on fundamental issues and values, a comprehensive program of inservice can be easily planned. This component of the set presents six generalizations about effective inservice programs and illustrates each with several different, but satisfactory, possibilities. These generalizations are: (1) teachers are more likely to benefit from programs in which they can choose goals and activities, as contrasted with programs in which they are preplanned; (2) school-based training programs have more influence than college-based programs; (3) program objectives should be specific; (4) programs that have different training experiences are more likely to accomplish their objectives than programs having common activities required of all participants; (5) teacher's personal goals/needs and those of the school should be congruent if training is to improve school system operations significantly; and (6) training (related to job assignments) is likely to be effective if adequate time is provided within the current work schedule for each activity. (MJB)

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AN OVERVIEW OF A PLANNING PROCESS

For An

INSERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM

An Informational Booklet

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Western Washington State College
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SP012 179

WHY DO WE HAVE INSERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

When you, as a teacher, think about the various inservice activities that you have participated in, you might wonder "WHY?" Is inservice just another add-on to an already overloaded day? How critical is it to your professional development? Does it really make a difference?

The question of the role of inservice and professional development of career teachers has come under increased scrutiny in recent years. It is becoming clear that the role of inservice education is poorly defined, and the lack of comprehensive models for inservice education programs may be critical.

Generally, when a teacher evaluates a course or workshop or conference, he asks himself "Did it make a difference in my classroom?" Effectiveness is generally measured or evaluated in terms of the immediate effects that are frequently observed in an informal way - void of any criteria. Seldom is a particular course or workshop viewed as part of a total program, a program which has an effect on the performance of students. As a teacher, have you ever been involved in the development of a long term plan for inservice?

We would like to suggest to you that there is a need for long term planning, and that meaningful inservice programs can be developed. Not only that, but we will suggest a procedure that might assist you in the development of an inservice program which will deal with the unique needs and concerns of your school and your students.

The approach that we will suggest hinges on the ability of the school staff to agree on certain principles and purposes.

CAN YOU AGREE:

Obviously we think that agreement on certain critical issues is possible. In fact, this booklet is part of a set of materials that has been prepared to assist teachers in developing their own inservice programs based on the notion that by getting the teachers to agree on fundamental issues and values, a comprehensive program of inservice can easily be planned.

This booklet and the accompanying materials are really a suggestion as to what to agree upon, and how to get the agreement. To begin with, it is essential that the target group of teachers, preferably the staff of a single school or department, should agree on the purposes of inservice education. The planning model considers that the definition of purposes includes six elements: (1) definition of inservice; (2) governing structures; (3) mandates and limitations; (4) roles of teachers; (5) available resources; (6) incentives.

The procedures for determining the local assumptions, conditions and constraints that affect the definition of purposes are contained in a companion to this booklet, "A Planning Process for Inservice Education". This document should be available to you, but it was written mainly as a guide for a planning team who will be responsible for the implementation of the planning process. Local school conditions will dictate the composition of the planning team.

Figure 1 is a schematic diagram of the planning model. You will note that there are three distinct processes. As a teacher in a school which is utilizing the process, you will be expected to participate in two workshops in Process A. The planning committee will obtain from you, during the workshops, some indication of your views concerning the purposes of inservice education. Your own opinions and those of the rest of the staff will be pooled and some agreement will be reached.

PLANNING PROCESSES

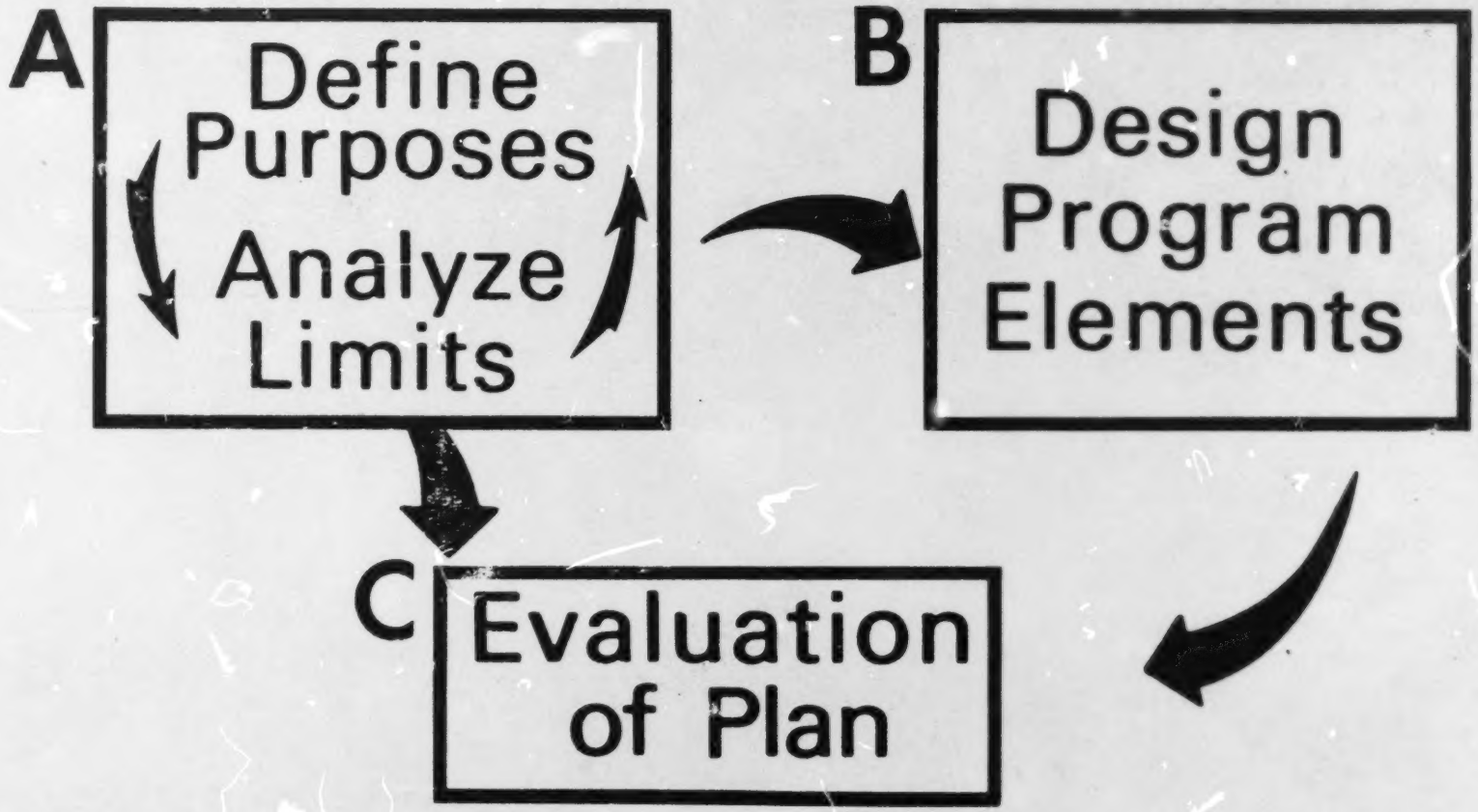

Figure 1: A Schematic Diagram of Inservice Planning Model

The planning committee will then use these statements of purpose as a base for the writing of an inservice plan. Process B provides some help to the committee by specifying what elements will have to be considered in the plan. The plan will then be reviewed by the total school staff and any other group or agency that might be called upon to participate in the inservice program.

Before final approval, the plan is evaluated using what is called Process C. Process C is based on some principles and criteria established through research and authoritative opinion on inservice education. The principles that seem to affect or characterize effective inservice education may be of interest to you at the outset.

PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE INSERVICE EDUCATION:

The following generalizations about effective inservice programs seem to have broad support. Regardless of the way an inservice program is perceived at the local level, the following seem to apply:

1. Teachers are more likely to benefit from inservice programs in which they can choose goals and activities as contrasted with programs in which the goals and activities are preplanned for them.

2. Teachers are more likely to be influenced in school-based training programs than those taking place on college campuses.

3. The objectives of an inservice program should be specific -- such as teaching performances or pupil achievements.

4. Training programs that have different training experiences are more likely to accomplish their objectives than programs that have common activities required of all participants.

5. The teacher's personal goals/needs and those of the school should be congruent if training is to improve school system operations significantly.

6. Training (related to job assignments) is likely to be effective if adequate time is provided within the current work schedule for each activity.

These six general principles can be used as criteria for judging the possible effectiveness of any plan for inservice education. In part, they form a basis for the evaluation scheme which is incorporated in the planning model.

EXAMPLES OF ELEMENTS FOR INSERVICE PROGRAMS:

The six principles stated above might seem to dictate a particular kind of inservice program, so it is important to show that within the principles there is a wide range of latitude for the development of unique, site-specific inservice programs. To illustrate the potential variability, each of the six principles will be illustrated by some different, but satisfactory possibilities.

PRINCIPLE 1: Teachers are more likely to benefit from inservice programs in which they can choose goals and activities as contrasted with programs in which the goals and activities are preplanned for them.

Example A: In a single school, the faculty, the school principal, and a college representative form a planning committee. An assessment of student needs is conducted seeking information from (1) examination of student achievement, (2) analysis of socio-economic factors, (3) questionnaires completed by teachers, (4) a goal-setting exercise involving teachers, pupils, and parents.

The planning committee prepares programs designed to meet these needs. The proposed programs are reviewed by the college, the faculty, and the school district administration. The planning committee considers their suggestions and makes revisions, if necessary. The planning committee then approves the programs and arranges for delivery and financing.

Example B: In a district, a consortium composed of one representative from the school district administration, one from the professional association and one from the college is established to approve proposed programs. A task force in a single school composed of teachers and parents identifies areas where additional teacher training is needed (based on program needs) and proposes program(s) to meet those needs. The consortium approves the program(s) and arranges for program delivery and financing.

Example C: The school district identifies pupil needs from existing information and requests that school faculties identify training needs to meet these needs. The district meets with representatives of colleges or other agencies who can provide delivery of needed programs and reaches agreement on proposed programs.

Example D: The professional association proposes to the school district that additional inservice training programs be made available for teachers. The district agrees to cooperate with the association in an assessment of unmet pupil needs and teachers' perceptions of where additional training is needed. A college is asked to recommend program delivery systems for meeting training needs.

Example E: A college requests that a school district provide information on teacher training needs so that their program can respond better to client needs. The district suggests that the teachers' association cooperate with the district in assessing needs. Following this assessment the three parties plan a program which responds to teacher needs.

PRINCIPLE 2: Teachers are more likely to be influenced in school-based training programs than those taking place on college campuses.

Example A: All members participate in a program designed to help them implement an adopted plan.

Example B: Departments or grade levels identify specific training needs and programs are offered for each group.

Example C: A limited number of training needs are identified and individual teachers select the program they prefer.

PRINCIPLE 3: The objectives of an inservice program should be specific -- such as teaching performances or pupil achievements.

As a result of collaborative decision making based on pupil needs it is determined that the inservice training should improve teacher performance in such areas as:

(A) Individualized instruction.
(B) Utilizing learning management systems.
(C) Diagnostic - prescriptive teaching.
(D) Designing and implementing a more effective program in some discipline.
(E) Effective instructional strategies for students with learning disabilities.
(F) Mainstreaming handicapped pupils.
(G) Integrating career (or environmental) education into the total program.
(H) Increasing use of instructional technology.
(I) Increasing teachers' repertoire of teaching strategies.

PRINCIPLE 4: Training programs that have different training experiences are more likely to accomplish their objectives than programs that have common activities required of all participants.

Examples A: A single program is adopted with the college allowing the credits to apply to different kinds of teachers' certification and degree needs - (with appropriate performance standards tied to those needs).

Example B: A variety of programs are designed to meet needs of teachers individually or grouped according to (1) professional assignment (2)previous training (or experience) (3) individual commitment.

Example C: Individual teachers or groups of teachers are given the opportunity to participate in existing programs (which meet identified needs) offered by a variety of delivering agencies.

PRINCIPLES 5: The teacher's personal goals/needs and those of the school should be congruent if training is to improve school system operations significantly.

Example A: The district agrees to provide substitutes and/or released time for inservice activities and the teachers agree to utilize some of their non-school time.

Example B: The district agrees to pay the instructional costs of the program and the teachers agree to provide the time.

Example C: Categorical grants are obtained which pay all or part of the costs.

PRINCIPLE 6: Training (related to job assignments) is likely to be effective if adequate time is provided within the current work schedule for each activity.

Example A: Time normally used for curriculum development, planning, or other job related responsibilities is used for in-service training which assists in meeting these responsibilities.

Example B: Teachers are given credits applicable to salary schedule increments, tuition is paid, or released time is provided.

Example C: The district provides substitutes, aides or other resources to assist teachers when engaged in inservice activities.

SUMMARY

The above examples are only a few of the possible variations that are available to a local planning committee. There is no one best inservice program, but there may be a best program for a particular site, if the program takes into account the local conditions and needs.

The pattern for the planning process is simple.

1. Analyze the local situation to determine what inservice education ought to be, as held by those most likely to influence the program.

2. Establish the extent to which resources will be available for carrying out the program.

3. Clarify the potential incentives for teachers and the various agencies involved.

4. Then design and arrange the program elements so that they both meet general standards for effective inservice education and are consistent with local values.

THE OTHER MATERIALS IN THIS SET

This booklet is one of a set of materials, each of which is briefly described below:

1. a. Process Guide: This is a manual to be used by a local planning committee who would be responsible for the development of the inservice program. The Process Guide describes in detail the activities for the teacher workshops, and the integration of the activities with the informational booklet and the filmstrip presentation described below. The guide is written specifically for the planning committee.

   b. Workshop Activities: The procedures and materials for implementing the initial steps in the planning process. They are an appendix to the process guide.

   c. Transparencies: A set of transparency masters for an overhead projector are provided to use in the planning process as an alternative to the filmstrip presentation. They are an appendix to the process guide.

2. Informational Booklet: This booklet and/or the slide tape presentation (see below) will be used to introduce the staff of the target school to the planning process for an inservice component. The booklet describes the overall planning process.

3. Filmstrip Presentation: The filmstrip presentation is for

teachers, and presents the same kinds of information as in the booklet. It emphasizes the actual planning process and describes the actual tasks the teachers will be expected to undertake. The filmstrip presentation leads into the first activity in the teacher workshops on the definition of purposes for inservice education.

4. Monograph - A Generic Model for Inservice Education: A description of a general model for inservice education based on research findings and authoritative opinion. It is to be used for background information by the planning committee and any other group or individual requiring in-depth understanding of the conceptual base for the planning process.

   The planning process includes an evaluation scheme built around criteria and indicators. The model is to be used to evaluate the local plan prior to implementation.